

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04

SIL-01 DHA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AGRE-00 /093 W

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P R 281557Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5461

INFO AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PE, SHUM, ELAB

SUBJECT: DISTURBANCES CONTROLLED BUT POLITICAL/LABOR SITUATION
REMAINS UNCERTAIN.

REF: LIMA 5297

1. LIMITED WEEKEND PRESS COVERAGE OF THE POLITICAL AND LABOR SITUATION IN AREAS WHERE DISTURBANCES HAVE OCCURRED (REFTEL) REFLECTS A GOP EFFORT TO MINIMIZE A STILL TROUBLESOME PROBLEM. PRESS REPORTS DID NOT ELABORATE ON RATHER OPTIMISTIC STATEMENTS OF GOP OFFICIALS. IN AREQUIPA, THE GOVERNMENT CLAIMED THAT THE SITUATION WAS AGAIN NORMAL FOLLOWING A 48-HOUR PARTIALLY EFFECTIVE STRIKE. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, AREQUIPA LABOR LEADERS MET WITH ARMY REGIONAL COMMANDER GENERAL JUAN SANCHEZ JUNE 25 AND AGREED TO END THEIR STRIKE ACTION. FACTORIES, STORES, THE SOUTHERN RAILWAY, AND OTHER MEANS OF TRANSPORT ARE OPERATING NORMALLY, ACCORDING TO THE PRESS. HOWEVER, LABOR MINISTRY OFFICIALS INFORMED THE EMBASSY JUNE 27 THAT WORKERS IN SOME LARGE AREQUIPA FACTORIES REMAIN ON STRIKE AND TRAINS ARE STILL NOT MOVING. OFFICIAL ALSO TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT

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THE SPCC TOQUEPALA MINE (NEAR AREQUIPA) WAS STRUCK JUNE 25. THE UNION HAD ALLEGEDLY AGREED TO CEASE ITS STRIKE ACTIVITY JUNE 27 PENDING CONVERSATIONS WITH COMPANY OFFICIALS, BUT WORKERS ARE STILL ON STRIKE AND THE SPCC UNION AT ILO THREATENS TO JOIN THEM. SCHOOLS IN AREQUIPA REMAIN CLOSED.

2. THE GOP REDUCED ITS CURFEW IN CUZCO TO RUN FROM MIDNIGHT UNTIL

5:00 A.M. AND ANNOUNCED THAT THE SITUATION THERE HAS RETURNED TO NORMAL. CUZCO SCHOOLS ARE TO REOPEN JUNE 30. MINISTER OF INTERIOR CISNEROS COMMENTED TO THE LIMA PRESS JUNE 24 THAT 98 PERSONS HAVE BEEN DETAINED IN CUZCO FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN DISORDERS AND THAT ONE CIVILIAN DIED DURING THE UNREST. CISNEROS ALSO TOLD THE PRESS THAT AYACUCHO REMAINS UNSETTLED. ON JUNE 23, THE AYACUCHO AREA WAS PLACED UNDER AN 8:00 P.. TO 5:00 A.M. CURFEW.

3. DISTURBANCES AND LABOR UNREST IN PUNO EASED JUNE 24 FOLLOWING A PROMISE BY THE MILITARY ZONE COMMANDER TO PREVENT FURTHER FOOD PRICE INCREASES. AT LEAST PARTIAL TRAIN SERVICE TO CUZCO WAS RESTORED. ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT A BOMB EXPLODED IN JULIACA NEAR PUNO DAMAGING TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES. RIOTERS THERE JUNE 23 DESTROYED OFFICES OF SINAMOS AND AEROPERU.

4. NO MAJOR LABOR UNREST HAS OCCURRED IN LIMA, BUT BANK WORKERS ARE CALLING FOR A JUNE 30 STRIKE TO PROTEST DETENTION OF BANK WORKERS DURING AN EARLIER STRIKE. ALSO, THE FAR-LEFT TEACHERS UNION (SUTEP) THREATENS A JULY 5 NATIONWIDE PROTEST STRIKE. INTERIOR MINISTER CISNEROS ANNOUNCED THAT "17 OR 18" PERSONS ARE DETAINED IN LIMA FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN RECENT LABOR PROTESTS. CISNEROS ALSO STATED THAT A "FOREIGN PRIEST" WAS ARRESTED AND THEN TURNED OVER TO THE ARCHBISHOP, FOR HIS INVOLVEMENT IN AN ILLEGAL MEETING IN THE SLUM TOWN OF VILLA EL SALVADOR. THE EMBASSY LEARNED THAT A CROWD IN VILLA EL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SALVADOR OCCUPIED THE CHURCH THERE AND DEMANDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT ROLL BACK FOOD PRICES INCREASES. POLICE APPARENTLY CONVINCED THE CROWD TO DISPERSE QUIETLY AND THEN ARRESTED THE FOREIGN PRIEST (BISHOP'S OFFICE TOLD EMBASSY HE WAS IRISH).

5. IN OTHER RELATED DEVELOPMENTS THE GOP ROUTINELY EXTENDED THE SUSPENSION OF CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES JUNE 24 FOR ANOTHER 30 DAYS, AND LESS ROUTINELY RULED AGAINST NATIONAL DAY STUDENT PARADES. THE PARADES WERE OSTENSIBLY CANCELLED FOR AUSTERITY REASONS, ALTHOUGH GOP CONCERN WITH POTENTIAL ANTI-GOVERNMENT MANIFESTATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN PRIMARY MOTIVATION.

COMMENT: THE GOVERNMENT HAS THUS FAR CONTAINED DISTURBANCES THROUGH TOUGH POLICE ACTION AND SECURITY MEASURES, INCLUDING THE IMPOSITION OF CURFEWS. GOP THREATS AND SOME ARRESTS HAVE NOT PREVENTED ILLEGAL STRIKES, AND THE LABOR SITUATION IS AT LEAST AS GREAT A CAUSE FOR CONCERN AS SPONTANEOUS PROTEST. CONVINCED THAT THE MOSCOW-LINE CGTP IS ORCHESTRATING MUCH OF THE STRIKE ACTIVITY, THE GOP STILL HOPES THAT TOUGH TALK WITH UNION LEADERS WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO AVERT A MORE DIRECT GOVERNMENT CONFRONTATION WITH LABOR.
SHLAUDEMAM

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